

10/19/17



LaSalle County (Randy Timmons, IDNR District Forester)

Northwest

Hard maples/sunset maples have nice colors of reddish orange to maroon, but some of the leaves are missing. Cottonwoods on the bottoms are showing good color of yellows. Sumacs are still holding onto some of their leaves along road rights of way. Hickories still have good colors of yellowish golden browns. Oaks may be starting to show a little color, but are still a couple of weeks from peak color. Over the next two weeks, expect to start to see the changeover for maples/cottonwoods/ash over to the oak colors. The maples and others will be dropping leaves. Oaks will hold on for a while. Frost is possible in low lying areas in Carroll Co.

Dull green is still the dominant color in the woods, although more leaves are yellowing and turning brownish yellow. The white ashes and red maples are still showing pinkish purple to maroon to scarlet-these are usually the first to change, but continue to contribute color. Walnut, cherry, and cottonwood have yellowed and dropped leaves in many cases. Oaks continue to fight the color change. Sumac leaves are fading to a pinkish red and falling, and the dogwood shrubs are also showing a duller, grayish maroon. Burning bushes in yards are about at their peak, showing multiple colors from a brownish orange to dark maroon in the Quad Cities area.

Northeast

In McHenry County, colors are getting better. Hickories are really showing yellow. The ashes that are being treated are turning a nice dark red and purple. Silver maples are turning yellow. Other than that, the tree canopy remains largely green.

In the Will County area, drought stress along the I-80 corridor is still having impacts despite recent rains. Summac and vines are at peak, but not showy by any means. Oaks are showing some brown on leaf fringes due to stress. Hickories and sugar maples are turning yellow from tops down. Walnut leaves are about one-third gone. In urban areas, drought stressed locust, linden, and elm trees are about one-half devoid of leaves. Soft maples are still turning from tops down. Some reddish/purples showing in pear trees.



McDonough County (Barrie McVey, IDNR District Forester)

West Central

In McDonough County, oaks aren't showing much color yet. Maples are starting, but are mostly showing yellows. Signs of fall color did perk up after the recent rainfall. It's pretty, but not vibrant yet.

Fall color has finally set in on the sugar maples and is adding plenty of orange. The sassafras are bright red to purple this week in the Mason County area. Color is almost at peak, with only the oaks still not really showing much color.

Calhoun, Pike, Adams, Scott, Brown, Macoupin, Greene, and Jersey counties: Not much change from last week. Still a lot of green, but widespread color changes in understory and mid-story species (sumac, dogwood, creeper vines - red; sassafras and sugar maple - red/orange/yellow; ironwood - yellow-brown); significant but varied color changes in the canopy species (sugar maple - red/orange/yellow; ash

- purple/red/yellow; walnut - yellow; sycamore, cottonwood, silver maple, and hickory - brown/yellow). Weather dependent, peak colors should hit in the next week or two.



Central

In the LaSalle County area, color is picking up a little, but the oak hickory forests are still green with some hickories in the yellow stage now. Where there is maple in the mix, the sugar maples are giving some very nice individual tree colors in orange-red/orange and in yellow. These are found along the river bluff in the deeper ravines and coves. There are more reds showing in the sumacs, dogwoods, and poison ivy and Virginia creeper vines. The prairie grasses are seeding and the green summer colors are giving way to the purplish reds and browns and yellowish straw colors. There are fewer flowers blooming, but the golden rods are still going, and an occasional thistle plant still has some flowers. Sassafras are turning beautiful reds. Drive carefully, and pay attention to slow moving traffic as more people flock to the area to see the fall colors.

Fall Colors Weekend is this weekend at Starved Rock State Park (Oct. 21-22), with guided hikes leaving the Visitor Center at 9 a.m. to visit overlooks and canyons to view October colors. Remember, access to the west entrance to Starved Rock may be limited due to bridge construction on IL Rt. 178.

<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/Traffic-Alert-to-Starved-Rock-State-Park-Visitors---Lane-Restrictions-Due-to-Construction-on-IL-Rt.-178.aspx>

South

Around the Clinton County area, the sweet gum, green ash, cherry, hickory, and sycamore leaves are turning yellow. Many of the sassafras and sumac continue to turn shades of red, but their leaves continue to drop. A few of the white ash have started to turn a light red/purple color. Several of the Virginia creeper and poison ivy vines are turning red.

In Randolph County, the forest trees are now beginning to turn, with mostly yellow from elm, cherry and ash and some pastels from the sugar maples are starting. The majority of the forest canopy is still green and, southern Illinois is likely two weeks away from peak color. The sumacs, poison ivy, Virginia creeper and sassafras are all still bright red, but are rapidly losing leaves. Hickories are turning yellow; sugar maples are beginning to turn various pastels. Elm, ash and cherry trees are yellow and quickly losing leaves.